

Leaving London near the end of 1791, the newly-appointed representative of the Crown landed in Quebec, and in the spring of 1792 proceeded on his journey to his new scene of labor. It was a novel procession that thus slowly wended its way westward. The erstwhile English colonel and his staff occupied a small fleet of bark canoes which were steered through the smoother waters of the St. Lawrence by trusty Indians and portaged past the rapids. At a humble hostelry midway on the journey, the distinguished voyageur rested beneath an inviting sign which bore the sentences:—

“LIVE AND LET LIVE.”

“PEACE AND PLENTY TO ALL MANKIND.”

With a salvo of artillery from an old French cannon, assisted by the demonstrations of loyalty from George III's liegemen, “in their queer old broad-skirted military coats, their low-tasselled boots, and their looped chapeaux,” the king's representative received the honor and attention befitting so rare and high a dignitary, and responded in speech-making and health-drinking. In due time the fleet reached Kingston, where Simcoe organized his government by the selection of his executive council on the 8th day of July, under the provisions of the Imperial Constitutional Act of 1791, the five members of the first council being William Osgoode, William Robertson, James Baby, Alexander Grant, and Peter Russell.

The event was one of solemnity, so the historian states, and the religious ceremony connected with it was performed in a little wooden church, the oaths of office being impressively administered to His Excellency and his advisers by the honorable Chief Justice Osgoode.

At the first meeting of the Executive Council the initial appointments of Legislative Councillors were made in Robert Hamilton, Richard Cartwright and John Munro, to which were afterward added William Osgoode, James Baby, Alexander Grant and Peter Russell, making the full complement of seven.

Having thus accomplished the preliminary work of organizing his government, Governor Simcoe left Kingston on July 21st,